

# The Charles Lamb Bulletin

**Summer 2021**

*New Series No. 173*

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*'Let us cultivate the Elian spirit of friendliness and humour'*

**Charles Lamb's Oriental Rhetoric**

TSZ TING YAN

**The Non-Binary Aesthetic of Lamb, Pater, and Wilde**

A. R. GUNN

**Wordsworth's Spenserian Poem**

CHRISTOPHER SIMONS

**Bringing Wordsworth 'closely to the eye'**

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FELICITY JAMES on *Wanderers* by Kerri Andrews



PUBLISHED BY  
THE CHARLES LAMB  
SOCIETY

## An Elian Bicentenary

Charles Lamb first published 'Imperfect Sympathies' in the *London Magazine*, in August, 1821.

### From 'Imperfect Sympathies'

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me — and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them—a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure—and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath—but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but even bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries, as they arise, without waiting for their full development. They are no systematisers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply.

Front cover images of Mary and Charles Lamb are taken from the William MacDonald edition of the *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* (London: Dent, 1903-1908)

# The Charles Lamb Bulletin

[www.charleslambociety.com/bulletin.html](http://www.charleslambociety.com/bulletin.html)

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The Charles Lamb Society Bulletin was published in quarterly issues from 1935 to 1972. Its first editor was the Elian scholar and poet S. M. Rich. The new series began in January 1973 as The Charles Lamb Bulletin under the editorship of Basil Savage.

The *Bulletin* is a peer-reviewed journal devoted to the study of Charles and Mary Lamb and their circle. It aims to promote Lamb scholarship and welcomes submissions in the form of essays, reviews, and notes and queries from established academics, new entrants to the field, and those who simply admire the Lambs' writings.

Essays submitted to the journal should preferably be in 11-point Book Antiqua typescript and between 4000 and 8000 words in length. Preferably, submissions should be sent to the Editor as an email attachment in MS Word. Submissions should be double-spaced throughout, including quotations, and should follow MHRA style, with a couple of minor alterations. A full style-sheet is available online at the Society's website. For further information contact the Editor, John Gardner, School of Humanities, Anglia Ruskin University, East Road, Cambridge, CB1 1PT ([john.gardner@aru.ac.uk](mailto:john.gardner@aru.ac.uk)).

# The Charles Lamb Society

[www.charleslambociety.com](http://www.charleslambociety.com)

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The Charles Lamb Society was founded on 1 February 1935 at a meeting at Essex Hall in The Strand. Its first President was Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Today, the Society aims to advance the study of the life, works, and times of Charles and Mary Lamb and their circle; to preserve for the public a collection of Elia (currently held at Guildhall Library, London); and to stimulate the Elia spirit of friendliness and humour.

The Society holds a series of events each year in London, including lectures, study days, and a Charles Lamb Birthday Luncheon. The Society also publishes the biannual peer-review journal, *The Charles Lamb Bulletin*.

For further information please contact either the Membership Secretary, Helen Goodman, [h.goodman@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:h.goodman@bathspa.ac.uk), or the Chairs, Felicity James, [fj21@le.ac.uk](mailto:fj21@le.ac.uk) and John Strachan, [j.strachan@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:j.strachan@bathspa.ac.uk)

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*Printed by the Stanhope Press, 14 Montague Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 9NH.*  
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*Registered Charity Number 1176897*  
*ISSN 0308-0951*